




CITY OF MIAMI BEACH
Office of the City Manager
Letter to Commission No. 280-2004

To: Mayor David Dermer and
Members of the City Commission

Date: October 29, 2004

From: Jorge M. Gonzalez
City Manager 

Subject: WEEKLY UPDATE

The purpose of this LTC is to provide you with an update describing some of the areas the Administration has recently been focusing on:

2004 Elections – City staff continue to work on the Vote Miami Beach effort, the City's ongoing campaign to create and stimulate awareness among Miami Beach residents about voting. These efforts include the early voter incentive program which began on October 18 and runs through October 31 and encourages our residents to vote early by offering several incentives. The City has also recruited staff to volunteer as Goodwill Ambassadors on election day, November 2, to assist the Miami Dade County Elections Department in ensuring that all who come to vote on election day have as positive an experience as possible.

International City and County Management Association (ICMA) / Leadership Florida - I had an opportunity to attend the following two leadership development opportunities last week: The ICMA Annual Conference took place from October 17-20 and focused on bringing together leaders from diverse domestic and international communities to discuss issues of mutual concern. Educational sessions, keynote speakers, workshops, and special events were offered to assist in addressing the multiple challenges and opportunities facing communities on a daily basis; The Leadership Florida conference took place from October 21-23 and focused on bringing together leaders from throughout the state of Florida to continue building a network throughout the state to deal with issues that affect the public and private sectors.

Emergency Preparedness Plans – City staff continues to meet and update the City's emergency preparedness plans in the wake of the recent hurricanes that threatened our area last month. Staff will continue to update our plans accordingly, particularly throughout the remainder of this year's hurricane season which ends on November 30.

Organizational Development – As part of my ongoing efforts to meet with staff from all levels throughout all City Departments, I held a brown bag lunch meeting

with staff from the Finance Department on October 26. In addition, a series of workshops have been taking place to assist staff in developing performance measures to evaluate how successful we are in achieving the City's vision and 5-year strategic plan. The first session took place on October 25 and focused on ensuring a vibrant community and the second session took place on October 26 and focused on enhanced neighborhood aesthetics and beautification. Future sessions are scheduled for November 23 and will focus on enhanced public safety, delivering CIP projects on time and on budget, and government sustainability.

Union Negotiations – Staff from Labor Relations and I met with representatives from the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) Union on October 27 and reached an agreement on a three year contract. This item will be brought to the City Commission for your approval at the December 8, 2004 City Commission meeting. On October 29, staff and I met with representatives from the Communications Workers of America (CWA) Union to continue with our ongoing discussions regarding a contract for CWA.

Major Events Plan (MEP) – City staff met to plan and allocate resources for several events that took place recently, including the MTV Latin Music Video Awards on October 21, and several that are expected to take place throughout the next few weeks, including Art Basel / Miami Beach which runs from November 30 – December 5, 2004. On a related note, the City's Major Events Plan will be included in the National League of Cities' (NLC) "Examples of Programs for Cities" database. The NLC has found our MEP program to qualify as a "proven city solution", and the MEP will join other proven city solutions that the NLC provides to its members.

Film & Print – Several productions are currently taking place on Miami Beach, most notable the following: (1) Sony/Dreamworks is producing a television pilot for the TNT network called *The Line* which follows the lives of Florida State Attorney Officers living in Miami/ Miami Beach, (2) Two features, *National Lampoon's Pledge This* and *Transporter 2*, which based and/or stayed in hotels in Miami Beach and filmed their entire schedule in South Florida recently wrapped production in our area, (3) Projects scouting the area for upcoming productions include the sequel to the Martin Lawrence comedy *Big Momma's House* and a Wes Craven directed thriller for called *Red Eye*. In addition, a representative from the Film Office attended *Showeast* in Orlando this week to continue discussion with the producers of the event about possibly relocating the trade show to Miami Beach in 2007. *Showeast* welcomes motion picture theater chains and owners as well as industry players to present advance screenings of major projects and discuss strategies for the motion picture exhibition business. Also, a representative from the Film Office recently attended the IFP market in New York, with the goal of making Miami Beach more attractive to up and coming filmmakers with projects of modest budget and branding Miami Beach as independent film friendly.

Capital Improvement Projects - On October 18, members of the G.O. Bond Oversight Committee and CIP staff toured a total of nine G.O. Bond Projects (three in each section) in South, Middle, and North Beach. These included: Lummus Park, South Shore Community Center; Flamingo Park and Pool, Fire Station No. 2/ New water tanks, Rakow Youth Center, 42nd Street, North Shore Park and Youth Center, Normandy Park and Pool, and Fire Station No. 4. Committee members were able to see projects in various stages of construction or completion and were pleased with staff's candor and the hands-on experience.

Grants Management – Several grant awards have recently been presented to the City, including the Florida Inland Navigation District grant in the amount of \$293,563 for construction of citywide seawalls; the Baseball Tomorrow Fund in the amount of \$26,000 for enhancement of the City's baseball programs; and a VCA grant in the amount of \$20,000 for the Bass Museum's current exhibit.

Public Safety – Staff from the Miami Beach Police Department (MBPD), in conjunction with the Miami-Dade County Department of Human Services and Safespace of Miami, participated in a Domestic Violence march and candlelight vigil on Sunday, October 24. The purpose of this event was to honor all victims of domestic violence and to raise awareness to this problem. On October 27, MBPD staff held a promotional ceremony for James Nash and Anthony LaMacchio who were promoted to sergeant and Richard Gullage who was promoted to lieutenant. Staff of the MBPD participated in the Police Citizen Relations Committee meeting on October 26, and the Venetian Isles Homeowners Association meeting on October 28.

Labor Relations - Approximately 50 Department Directors and supervisory staff, (represented by the Government Supervisor's Association – GSA), recently attended a seminar coordinated by the Office of Labor Relations in conjunction with the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, (FMCS) on "How to Conduct a Workplace Investigation." The seminar focused on the legal implications, and responsibilities of the Management and Supervisors who perform this work. This is one of several seminars that the Office of Labor Relations has conducted to provide Labor and Management with the opportunity to explore innovative joint approaches to organizational effectiveness.

Tuesday Morning Breakfast Club – I attended the Tuesday Morning Breakfast Club meeting on October 26 and had a conversation with the members present about various issues the City is involved with and answered questions they had about various topics.

Florida Sterling Council – I had an opportunity to speak at the Florida Sterling Council's "Best Practices Showcase" hosted by 2004 Sterling Award winner North Beach Elementary School. The mission of the Florida Sterling Council is to enhance Florida's competitive edge and quality through promotion, assessment, and recognition of performance excellence.

Royal Palm Hotel – Commissioner Smith, staff and I met with Joel Minsker on October 27 to discuss the status of the closing documents in connection with the Royal Palm Crowne Plaza Hotel.

Mayor on the Move Meeting – Staff and I attended the Mayor on the Move meeting held on October 28 for South Beach residents. This opportunity provided a forum for residents to share concerns and for the City to answer questions about various issues. Several residents also complimented the City for recent improvements in the areas of police, sanitation, and parks and recreation. The Administration participated and will respond to issues that were raised.

Noise Issues – In our ongoing efforts to deal with the noise issues affecting our community, staff and I met with representatives from the hotel industry to continue addressing this issue in order to come to a resolution. Additional meetings are planned with representatives from the hotel and night club industries to further discuss this issue with the goal of bringing to the City Commission an updated noise ordinance.

Employee Celebrations – Several celebrations have taken place recently, including an appreciation luncheon for the entire Sanitation Division staff for their clean-up efforts after the recent hurricanes. In addition, a citywide employee appreciation / Halloween luncheon was held on October 29 to thank all city staff for their hard work. An employee committee has already started meeting to begin preparing for our annual citywide holiday party which is scheduled for Saturday, December 18 evening at the Scott Rakow Youth Center. Details are still being worked on, but this year's event will invite all employees and their families to come enjoy a "winter wonderland" and all the amenities offered at the Scott Rakow Youth Center, including the new ice skating rink and an area (the former ice skating rink) that will have snow for children to play in. Once details are finalized, they will be shared with you and all City staff.

United Way Campaign - The City's 2004 United Way campaign began on October 11 marking the beginning of a citywide fundraising effort to benefit United Way-sponsored charities, many of whom are situated within the City of Miami Beach. The campaign runs through November 30, 2004.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please feel free to contact me.

Electronic Copy: Management Team

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